THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) and (b) 362.4 km of NH-5 in the State of Orissa has been taken up for 4-laning as part of Golden Quadrilateral, of which 185.77 km has been completed and balance is under implementation except for Ganjam-Icchapuram section, where the contract was terminated due to non-performance of contractors. There have been delays due to problems associated with acquisition of land, poor management by contractors, law & order problems, litigation etc.

(c) In order to expedite the progress, the projects are being monitored at various levels. To ease the cash flow problem of the contractors, discretionary advances are given. There is regular interaction with the authorities of the State Government about law and order problems. Efforts are also made to re-award the Ganjam-Icchapuram section.

Charging of toll fees

3250. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether NHAI charges toll fees for use of its highways, bridges, etc. at one-and-a-half times of one way charges if the return journey is performed within 24 hours;

(b) whether this cause hardship to genuine tourists/businessmen travelling by road who may perform return journey after some days; and

(c) whether Government propose to accommodate such genuine travelers under their scheme of allowing discount in case of both ways journey?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) Yes, Sir. This concession is available only for Highways/Bridges built under public funded projects.

However, the concession is not available in cases of user fee (toll) based on Private Investment Projects.

(b) There is no cause for hardship as user fee is levied for the maintenance and up-keep of the highway.

(c) Government have no such proposal under consideration.